GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4479
ANSWERED ON:24.04.2000
BAN ON INTERNATIONAL IVORY TRADE
SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether concerned with the decline in the elephant population in the country, Government of India have appealed to the member countries for ban on international ivory trade;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether poaching has increased in the country following restricted lifting the ban on the ivory trade;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether any response has been received from the member countries on the appeal so made; and

(f) if so, the reaction of the member countries and the steps being taken to save the elephant population in the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI)

(a) & (b) The 10th Conference of Parties(COP) of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Flora and Fauna (CITES) held in June,1997 at Harare had permitted down listing of three populations of African elephants namely, those of Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe from Appendix 1 to Appendix 2 of CITES, i.e., permitting ivory trade. This decision was taken through a majority vote, although some countries like India were opposed to it because of its likely impact on the Asian elephant population which faces serious threat from poaching for ivory. Government of India has expressed reservations to CITES Secretariat in this regard.

(c)&(d) There is likelihood of increasing poaching in the country following restricted lifting of the ban of ivory trade, however there is no reported direct adverse impact on the Indian elephant population. Details of elephant poaching reported from various states during the last three years are given in the annexure.

(e) & (f) The report on the 41st Standing Committee of the CITES held at Geneva during February 1999, shows that, the USA, Israe and Australia were strongly against the lifting of the ban alongwith India. From Europe, France, Germany, Netherlands, Austria and Belgium were also against the lifting of the ban. The African countries like Kenya, Zambia, Mali, Ghana, Chad, Congo, Liberia and Cameroon were also against the lifting of the ban of ivory trade.

The steps being taken to save the elephant population in the country are as given below:

(i) Elephant is included in Schedule 1 of the Wildlife (Protection) Act,1972, which provides full protection against hunting & commercial exploitation.

(ii) Trade in elephant ivory has been totally banned to discourage poaching of elephants for its tusk.

(iii) The Asian Elephant is also included in Appendix-1 of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Flora and Fauna(CITES) which prohibits International Trade in Asian Ivory.

(iv) Government of India has launched Project Elephant in 1992 to provide impetus to the conservation of wild elephants in India. Under this project assistance is given to 12 states for strengthening their protection and communication infrastructure, development of habitat, prevention & mitigation of man-elephant conflicts etc.

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (c) & (d) OF THE LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.4479 DUE FOR ANSWER ON 24.4.2000

Sl.No	STATE	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99

1. Andhra Pradesh	Nil	Nil	N.A.
2. Arunachal Pradesh	1	Nil	Nil
3. Assam	4	6	3
4. Bihar	2	3	N.A.
5. Karnataka	18	15	11
6. Kerala	7	2	2
7 Meghalaya	N.A.	N.A.	Nil
8. Nagaland	5	1	Nil
9. Orissa	11	7	N.A.
10. Tamil Nadu	15	6	9
11. Uttar Pradesh	Nil	Nil	Nil
12. West Bengal	Nil	Nil	6
Total	63	40	31